

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

J&M Industries

Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana

J&M Industries Applies Lean Principles To Save Money

Client Profile:

J&M Industries, founded in 1973, manufactures industrial tarps, shade cloths, and freeze protection products to the global market. The privately owned company employs 100 people at its single facility in Ponchatoula, Louisiana.

Situation:

J&M Industries was experiencing problems including a large amount of work-in-process on the shop floor, difficulty in finding orders, and difficulty in handling rush orders. The plant manager attended a Lean 101--Principles of Lean Manufacturing course held by the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPoL), a NIST MEP network affiliate, in early 2002. After completing the course, he requested that MEPoL review the flow of materials, product, and information for one of J&M Industries' industrial tarp product lines from a lean manufacturing perspective and assist in making any changes that would improve these flows.

Solution:

MEPoL reviewed the current material and information flow, along with line procedures and facility layout.

After analyzing the results of its data collection, MEPoL proposed layout changes in combination with the implementation of a visual pull system for orders. MEPoL recommended the addition of a finishing sewing area and suggested that orders be broken into batches based on linear feet of sewing, both of which serve to better control flow. By implementing these changes, J&M found it much easier to manage orders on the floor and to handle rush jobs. The company anticipates a much smoother production process during its busy season.

Results:

Improved product flow through the facility.

Decreased work-in-process by 25 percent.

Eliminated the need for overtime work to save \$50,000 in labor costs.

Using team-based goals derived from company production goals to compensate employees.

Testimonial:

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“Implementing the lean principles has definitely increased the flow of goods through the plant. It completely eliminated working overtime each week, which is directly reflected in the bottom line. The [Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana was] outstanding in their presentation and in teaching us old dogs new tricks.”

Al Bourgeois, Plant Manager